

<b>Institution: Leeds Beckett University</b>		
<b>Unit of Assessment: 34 – Media, Communication, Culture, Libraries and Information Management</b>		
<b>Title of case study: ‘Sensing Place’: Using Mobile Methodologies to Reconnect to the Spaces we Live in</b>		
<b>Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2014 to the present</b>		
<b>Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:</b>		
<b>Name(s):</b>	<b>Role(s) (e.g. job title):</b>	<b>Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:</b>
Dr Lisa Taylor	Senior Lecturer and Head of Subject, Media Studies	2006-Present
Dr Zoe Tew Thompson	Senior Lecturer in Media Studies	2012-Present
<b>Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2014-Present</b>		
<b>Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N</b>		
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>Sensing Place (SP) is an ongoing suite of work of multimodal, participatory projects with positive impacts on participants’ sense of personal well-being and community building. It seeks to counter the stigma and devaluing of spaces ‘left behind’ by Industrialisation and negative stereotypes of the North. More recently, SP provided recommendations for a local business, to aid its ability to maintain communities of older clients online over lockdown. SP has produced impacts on communities’ abilities to express and explore ‘belonging’ and to see space ‘anew’. This has bolstered well-being, brought communities together and re-affirmed the value of participants’ everyday experiences.</p>		
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Taylor and Tew Thompson work at the intersections of non-representational theories, interdisciplinary ‘turns’ to spatiality and affect, and participatory mobile methodologies. Their aim is to explore and counter the negative impact of deindustrialisation and urban change on people’s everyday lives. This case study explores affective connections to place. This is the first stage of a wider unfolding portfolio of work on space and place that has as its goal the creation of intersectional policy change to make places fit for liveable lives. This first stage seeks to impact on ordinary and the everyday disconnections and reconnections with spaces.</p> <p>Taylor’s work develops original and significant responses to spatial, architectural and social change, and develops interdisciplinary, creative approaches to the real-life problems of post-industrial areas where communities are eroded or divided. <i>Being</i> and <i>belonging</i> are key aspects of her work. This has prompted (i) her co-founding of the Commoners’ Choir with Boff Whalley (ex-member of Chumbawamba) (3.2) (ii) her focus on community belonging online (3.3) and in the ruins of deindustrialisation (3.1) and (iii) her new insights into the expression of ‘taste’ to home-making (3.5). Her work offers robust criticism of nostalgia, to develop sensuous, mobile ethnographic encounters with peoples’ memories of the shift from an industrial to a post-industrial village (3.1).</p>		

## Impact case study (REF3)

Tew Thompson's originality rests in her elucidation of the connections between two cultural theorists, Benjamin and Baudrillard to argue to methodological contribution with the idea of the 'surface ethnography' (3.6). This work underpinned explorations of urban transformation and cultivation through embodied/sensory practices of place-making through significant contributions to 'walk and talk' methods: **Urban Constellating' (February 2015)** took place in Leeds city centre and ended with a 'making workshop', where 20 participants shared experiences from the walk and created their own city snow globe. A free 'zine of participants' photographs and essays was circulated across the city. The **'You Are Here: Leaving the City' Walk (July 2015)** was a 16-mile night walk. 25 Participants experienced darkness advancing and receding to understand the interrelationship of city to countryside and consider the relationship between our internal landscapes and the external landscape. Recognising that engagements with space evoke memories, her empirical research (3.4) has examined regional TV, to argue that *Last of the Summer Wine* is a living memory for the local people and a broader imaginary. This original argument makes a significant contribution to understanding of the role of ordinary television in cultural memory through ethnographic work.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

3.1 Taylor, L (2019) 'Landscapes of Loss: Responses to Spatial Change in an Ex-Industrial Textiles Community' **Sociological Research Online** 25 (1): 46-65

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1360780419846508>

3.2 Taylor L & Whalley, B (2018) 'Real Change Comes From Below!': Walking and Singing about places that matter, the formation of *Commoners Choir*' **Leisure Studies** 38 (1): 58-73. DOI: [10.1080/02614367.2018.1521465](https://doi.org/10.1080/02614367.2018.1521465)

3.3 Taylor, L., Raisborough, J., Harrison, K., Dulson, S (2020) 'It's like Going to the Regular Class but without Being there': A Qualitative Analysis of Older people's Experiences of Exercise in the Home during Covid-19 Lockdown in England. **International Journal of the Sociology of Leisure** <https://doi.org/10.1007/s41978-020-00078-9>

3.4 - Hibberd, L.A. and Tew-Thompson, Z. (2017) Constructing Memories of Holmfirth through 'Last of the Summer Wine'. **Memory Studies**.11(2), pp. 245–256.

doi: [10.1177/1750698016679222](https://doi.org/10.1177/1750698016679222).

3.5 Taylor, L.J. (2016) 'He's ... making our North': Affective engagements with place in David Hockney's landscapes from 'A Bigger Picture'. **Participations**, 13 (2) December.

3.6 Thompson, Z (2015) **Urban Constellations: Spaces of Cultural Regeneration in Post-Industrial Britain**. Ashgate

This suite of research activities is **significant** by virtue of its development of affective/sense methods, and for its deliberate policy of bringing non-traditional participants into the processes and making of research. It is **original** in the focused attention it gives to locations in the West Yorkshire conurbation. Its **rigour** is attested to by the fact all the publications listed here have been subject to peer review.

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

SP has had positive impacts on participants' understanding of their own localities, and consequently, well-being and sense of belonging. This is the first stage of a wider portfolio of work that seeks to inform policy change to make places fit for liveable lives. This first stage seeks to impact on ordinary, everyday disconnections and reconnections with spaces.

***Commoners Choir: reconnecting politics to space***

Concern with community (3.1), Northern identity (3.5) and space, fuelled Taylor's desire to make a creative, change for local people. Collaborating with Chumbawamba's Boff Whalley, Taylor founded the Commoner's Choir (3.2). Participants reported experiencing enhanced wellbeing: 'I'm not arty at all, I'm an accountant, yet suddenly I was performing with people from very different walks of life' (5.4) : 'the choir is a community to which everyone contributes, whether its printing badges, writing song lyrics' (5.1); 'the shared act of singing in harmony...is very bonding' (5.4). A sense of community helped participants to regard themselves as activists: 'Joining [Commoners' Choir] was life changing. For the first time in my life... it made me realise I could protest about access to green space' (5.1). Examples of this activism include (i) celebrating the Mass Trespass of *Kinder Scout* and (ii) commemorations of the Magna Carta. Both highlighted the enduring barriers to access for ordinary people to much of the British landscape. 'when we sang at the top of Kinder Scout it gave me this indescribable feeling in my belly that singing about things that really matter produces.' (5.1). Extensive media attention in addition to local word of mouth on the benefits of the choir, have grown the membership from 28 in 2015 to 74 today.

***Landscapes: Reconnecting to the past (3.1) and to the North (3.5)***

Taylor's ongoing research explores residents' responses to a landscape altered by the demolition of a carpet factory that was a village's main employer. With residents, she co-produced an exhibition of ex-workers' photographs and artefacts. Participants noted how significant it was for them to have their working past valued. 'the project helped me feel more important about my working life, which up to now had seemed pointless.' (5.5). Giving people a voice with a future view to provide recommendations to policy makers was a valued aspect of this work: participants noted: 'we should be included in the planning decisions about what happens to old works villages in the future. The clock, some of the looms could be made into monuments to remind folk that we made fantastic carpets. Policy-makers should read your work and act with it in mind!' (5.5). This criticality was evident too in Taylor's work on owners of Hockney's work; participants testified to greater understanding about why Hockney's landscapes mattered as a counter-force to stigma of the North (5.2).

***Keeping communities through Covid (3.3)***

Exercise and social interactions are important to older citizens and both were threatened by Covid. Taylor with Raisborough and Harrison, used their expertise to evaluate an exercise business's transition to online classes for older clientele in the first lock down. The work produced a list of recommendations on pricing, and ways to sustain older people's sense of belonging with the business and other class members in the uncertain times of Covid. The business owner embraced the recommendations. The owner said: 'I learned they wanted the choice to use both studio and Zoom pilates and it gave me the confidence to make the key business decision to fully invest in both.' (5.6) The report enabled her to glean a tighter sense of the ontological security home held for her clients and gave her a 'more 3D sense of the circumstances of their physical and mental lives during pandemic.' (5.6)

***Seeing the places anew: reconnecting to present (3.4 and 3.6)***

Tew Thompson work (3.4, 3.6) argues that experiential and sensory elements of walking can have positive psychological benefits. Testimonial evidence affirms this. Participants' in her walking tours in and out of the city testified to the wellbeing benefits of taking part ('the walk did me so much good for such a long time') and the positive health effects of night walks ('the stress of work just melted away throughout the walk') (5.4). It also invited participants to see their city afresh: 'It didn't occur to me that that would be something of interest, so it elevated something that was quite everyday to me' (5.3).

Overall, the projects have led to an enhanced sense of community for its participants.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)**

- 5.1 Participant Testimonial: Jane Morland
- 5.2 Participant Testimonials: James Fisher
- 5.3 Participant Testimonial: Fiona Phillip
- 5.4 Participant Testimonial: Jane Shaw
- 5.5 Anonymous Feedback from Photographic Exhibition 'Remembering Carpet-Makers'
- 5.6 Testimonial: Joanna Reay